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PASEK MICHAEL S
78 GEORGETOWN 3158

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ACTION ARA-15
INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00
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FM AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN
TO USINFO WASHDC PRIORITY
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 8228
DOD WASHDC
UNCLAS GEORGETOWN 3158
USICA FOR PGM/RC AND AR
SECSTATE FOR ARA/CAR AND GUYANA SPECIAL WORKING GROUP
E.O. 11652 N/A
SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION
1. PRESS BRIEFING HELD NOVEMBER 24 AT USICA PRESS CENTER ATTENDED BY APPROXIMATELY 50 REPORTERS INCLUDING LOCAL MEDIA. QUESTIONS FOCUSED ON TWO GENERAL AREAS REASONS FOR DELAY IN FINDING ERROR IN ORIGINAL BODY COUNT, AND IDENTITY AND CITIZENSHIP OF SOME CHILDREN FOUND UNDER BODIES OF ADULTS. ON LATTER POINT, QUESTION WAS RAISED WHETHER MILITY WAS CERTAIN, PRIOR TO SHIPPING BODIES TO U.S., ALL WERE U.S. CITIZENS.
2. FIVE REPORTERS OBTAINED GOG MINISTRY OF INFORMATION (MOI) AUTHORIZATION AND TRANSPORTATION TO JONESTOWN SITE NOVEMBER 23. AFTER MILITARY-SUPERVISED TOUR THEIR REQUEST FOR RETURN TRANSPORTATION BY USAF CRAFT DENIED DUE LACK OF AVAILABILITY. UPI REPORTER MARIN HOUSEMAN CALLED PRESS CENTER NOVEMBER 24 FOR ASSISTANCE IN GETTING THEM OUT, BUT WAS TOLD THEY MUST USE SAME MEANS FOR EXIT AS ENTRY UNLESS SPACE BECOMES AVAILABLE LATER ON USAF

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY _____ DATE _____
RDS☐or XDS☐EXT. DATE _____
TS AUTH. _____ REASON(S) _____
ENDORSE EXISTING MARKINGS ☐
DECLASSIFIED☐ RELEASABLE☐
RELEASE DENIED☐
PA or FOI EXEMPTIONS _____

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AIRCRAFT. MOI ARRANGED TRANSPORTATION OUT OF AREA.
3. FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS QUERIES AND LOCA MEDIA COVERAGE CONCENTRATED ON REVISED TOTAL OF BODIES, WITH CONTINUING ATTENTION TO SURVIVORS. MURDER CHARGES FILED NOVEMBER 23 AGAINST ONE NEW PEOPLES TEMPLE MEMBER ALSO NOTED.
4. HEAVY LOCAL COVERAGE NOVEMBER 24 OF DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER PTOLEMY REID'S SPEECH NOVEMBER 23 BEFORE PARLIAMENT GIVING GOG REPORT ON PORT KAITUMA AND JONESTOWN INCIDENTS. FULL TEXTS PRINTED IN DAILY "GUYANA CHRONICLE" AND PNC WEEKLY ORGAN, "THE NEW NATION". SPEECH CARRIED LIVE BY GOVERNMENT RADIO.
5. WEEKLY "NEW NATION", OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF RULING PEOPLE'S NATIONAL CONGRESS PARTY, CARRIED EDITORIAL AND EDITORIAL CARTOON NOVEMBER 26. CARTOON SHOWS MACHETTE LABELLED "INTERNATIONAL CONSPIRACY" CUTTING DOWN YOUNG TREE SYMBOLIZING PEOPLES TEMPLE. BLOCK QUOTES FROM

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78 GEORGETOWN 3458
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EDITORIAL FOLLOW.
6. "FOR ONE THING MANY IN THE UNITED STATES WERE DETERMINED THAT THE JONESTOWN COMMUNE SHOULD NOT SUCCEED. THEY MADE EVERY EFFORT, THEREFORE, TO UNDERMINE AND DISCREDIT. WHY?
7. "THAT SO MANY PEOPLE SHOULD WANT TO LEAVE THE 'COMFORT' OF THE UNITED STATES TO COME AND SETTLE IN GUYANA'S HINTERLAND REFLECTED ADVERSELY ON THE 'AMERICAN' WAY OF LIFE. THAT THEY COULD HAVE DONE SO SUCCESSFULLY WOULD HAVE CAUSED GREAT ANGER AND DISSATISFACTION IN MANY QUARTERS. THEREFORE WAHATEVER DISSATISFACTION OR
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DISAGREEMENT EXISTED IN THE COMMUNE WAS ENCOURAGED AND, IT APPEARS, EVEN EXAGGERATED.
8. " A HOSTILE PRESS CAMPAIGN WAS STARTED AND RELENTLESSLY PURSUED AND THE DIFFERENCES AMONG THE TEMPLE MEMBERS WERE EXPLOITED TO THE FULL. THESE SEEM TO HAVE AFFECTED UNDULY THE MIND OF JONESTOWN'S FOUNDER, PASTOR JIM W. JONES. HE THEREFORE APPEARS TO HAVE TAKEN THE DECISION, AFTER CONGRESSMAN LEO RYAN INSISTED ON VISITING THE COMMUNE, THAT HE AND A NUMBER OF THOSE ACCOMPANYING HIM SHOULD NOT LEAVE JONESTOWN ALIVE.
. "WHAT HAPPENDED AFTER THAT DECISION WAS TAKEN IS NOW HISTORY. WE DEEPLY REGRET THE UNTIMELY DEATH OF CONGRESSMAN RYAN, THE JOURNALISTS AND PHOTOGRAPHER WHO ACCOMPANIED HIM AND THE DEATH OF THE SETTLERS AT JONESTOWN.
10. "REGRETS, ALAS, CAN CHANGE NOTHING. BUT WE ALL CAN, IF WE WILL, LEARN FROM EVENTS SUCH AS THOSE WHICH OCCURRED AT JONESTOWN JUST ONE WEEKEND AGO. ONE OF THE THINGS WE SHOULD ALWAYS SEEK CONSISTENLY TO AVOID IN THIS LIFE IS REPETITION OF THE SAME MISTAKE."
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